

## Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 290675

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 290675

NODIS

CHEROKEE FOR AMBASSADOR AND ASST SECTY SCHAUFLE ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT LAGOS 13358 SENT SECSTATE NOV 26, 1976

QUOTE S E C R E T LAGOS 13358

NODIS

CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY, WISNER AND REINHARDT

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NI, AO, WA, SF, RH

SUBJ: NUJOMA AND OBASANJO ON NAMIBIA AND ANGOLA

REF : (A) LAGOS 13237: (NODIS); (B) STATE 286628 (NODIS)

1. SUMMARY: IN LENGTHY MEETING NOVEMBER 26, SWAPO LEADER NUJOMA AND HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO GAVE DCM THEIR VIEWS ON NAMIBIAN (AND ANGOLAN) SITUATION. NUJOMA PRESENTED "SWAPO'S CONDITIONS FOR TALKS" AND MADE CLEAR THAT PRIOR RELEASE OF SWAPO PRISONERS BY SAG IS ESSENTIAL PRE-REQUISITE. DISCUSSION INDICATED POSSIBLE COMPROMISE ON THIS ISSUE MAY LIE IN SWAPO ASSURANCE THAT PRISONERS, IF  
SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 290675

RELEASED, WOULD NOT ENGAGE IN VIOLENCE WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDER WAY. QUESTION OF U.N. ROLE IN TALKS ALSO APPEARS TO PRESENT PROBLEMS, AS NUJOMA SAYS CONFERENCE MUST BE UNDER "U.N. AUSPICES" WITH U.N. CHAIRMAN. NUJOMA ASSERTED THAT BALL IS IN SECRETARY

KISSINGER'S COURT TO COMMENT ON "SWAPO'S CONDITIONS" AND GIVE UP-DATE ON PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN TALKS WITH SAG SINCE SEPTEMBER 29. OBASANJO VOICED STRONG CONCERN OVER NAMIBIAN SITUATION AND WISHED TO STEM DRIFT TOWARD MILITARY ACTION. HE EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION OVER CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA AND ASSERTED CUBANS COULD BE GOT OUT IF FOREIGN-BACKED UNITA/FNLA AND SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY INTERVENTION WOULD STOP. END SUMMARY.

2. EXTAFF COMMISSIONER GARBA PHONED THE EMBASSY MORNING OF NOVEMBER 26, SPEAKING TO DCM AS AMBASSADOR WAS IN BENIN CITY ON PRIOR COMMITMENT. GARBA SAID SWAPO LEADER SAM NUJOMA WAS IN LAGOS AND HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO WANTED TO HAVE A JOINT DISCUSSION; HE ASKED DCM COME TO DODAN BARRACKS AT 1030 A.M.

3. WHILE DCM WAS IN WAITING ROOM AT HEAD OF STATE'S COMPLEX IN DODAN BARRACKS, NUJOMA WAS USHERED OUT OF INNER OFFICES AND SEATED AT OTHER END OF ROOM. DCM TOOK OCCASION TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF AND INITIATE CONVERSATION WITH NUJOMA, INDICATING HOPE THAT LATTER WOULD SOON UNDERTAKE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA OVER NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE. NUJOMA REFERRED TO "SWAPO'S CONDITIONS FOR TALKS" WHICH HE SAID HAD BEEN PASSED SECRETARY KISSINGER IN LUSAKA IN EARLY SEPTEMBER (TEXT BY SEPTTEL). NUJOMA SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT PRE-CONDITION WAS THAT SAG MUST RELEASE ALL SWAPO POLITICAL PRISONERS BEFORE ANY TALKS. SOME OF THE PRISONERS WERE NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS. ANOTHER REQUIREMENT WAS WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS FROM NAMIBIA, BUT MODALITIES FOR THIS COULD BE DISCUSSED AT GENEVA CONFERENCE. THE CONFERENCE, MOREOVER, SHOULD BE UNDER U.N. AUSPICES AND CHAIRED BY UNSYG OR OTHER UN OFFICIAL, AND SWAPO WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND NOT REPEAT NOT WITH KAPUWO OR OTHER HENCHMEN OF SOUTHERNAFRICA.

4. DCM INDICATED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD SECURED MAJOR CONCESSIONS FROM SOUTH AFRICA REGARDING SHIFTING OF CONFERENCE FROM WINDHOEK TO GENEVA, UNDER AEGIS OF U.N., WITH ONLY A REPRESENTATIVE DELEGATION FROM WINDHOEK CONFERENCE, AND WITH PARTICIPATION OF SWAPO. SECRETARY EXPECTED SOUTH AFRICA WOULD SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO GENEVA TO NEGOTIATE ALL ISSUES CONCERNING  
SECRET

PAGE 03     STATE 290675

NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA AND ACCEPT THE CONFERENCE'S CONCLUSIONS ON A NAMBIAN SETTLEMENT. FOLLOWING OUTLINE PROVIDED IN SECRETARY'S LETTER TO OBASANJO, DCM MENTIONED POSSIBILITY THAT RELEASE OF "MANY" SWAPO PRISONERS COULD BE SECURED; EMPHASIZED THAT ABOVE APPEARED THE LIMIT OF CONCESSIONS THAT COULD BE OBTAINED FROM SOUTH AFRICAN IN ABSENCE OF ACTUAL NEGOTIATIONS; AND URGED THE IMPORTANCE OF MOVING ON TO A CONFERENCE, AS THAT WOULD PROVIDE BARGAINING ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH FURTHER CONCESSIONS COULD BE SOUGHT AND SOLID PROGRESS ACHIEVED TOWARD EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE. NUJOMA WAS FRIENDLY AND POSITIVE IN APPROACH BUT STUCK ON THE POINT OF PRIOR RELEASE OF ALL PRISONERS, WITHOUT WHICH HE WOULD NOT ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID HE HAD PASSED "SWAPO'S CONDITIONS" TO SECRETARY KISSINGER AND WAS

AWAITING HIS RESPONSE. DCM SAID HE WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION NUJOMA WAS TO CONSULT WITH COLLEAGUES AND AFRICAN LEADERS ON BASIS OF HIS SEPTEMBER 29TH CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY AND WAS TO BE BACK IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE SECRETARY. NUJOMA DENIED THIS AND SAID THE SECRETARY HAD HIS "CONDITIONS" AND THE BALL WAS IN HIS COURT TO RESPOND TO THEM.

5. NUJOMA AND DCM WERE THEN CALLED TO JOIN HEAD OF STATE. OBASANJO OPENED WITH STATEMENT OF WELCOME, OBSERVING THAT FMG WAS KEENLY INTERESTED IN RESOLUTION OF NAMIBIAN PROBLEM, THERE WAS APPARENTLY A MISUNDERSTANDING, AND HE WANTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NUJOMA'S PRESENCE TO CLEAR IT UP. HE THEN ASKED NUJOMA TO PRESENT HIS CASE, WHICH NUJOMA DID, MUCH AS IN PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4 ABOVE. OBASANJO THEN ASKED DCM IF HE HAD ANY COMMENTS. DCM AGREED THERE INDEED SEEMED TO BE A MISUNDERSTANDING, WELCOMED FACT THAT PRESENT MEETING BROUGHT THIS TO LIGHT, AND EXPRESSED HOPE THE WAY MIGHT NOW BE OPENED TO BREAKING LOG JAM, AS SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD WRESTED MAXIMUM CONCESSIONS FROM VORSTER, AND ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR FURTHER PROGRESS WAS ENGAGEMENT IN NEGOTIATIONS. NUJOMA INSISTED ON PRIOR RELEASE OF ALL PRISONERS. DCM SAID HE ASSUMED SOUTH AFRICAN RESPONSE TO THIS WOULD BE THAT SOME PRISONERS HAD ENGAGED IN VIOLENCE AND COULD NOT BE RELEASED BECAUSE THEY WOULD AGAIN ENGAGE IN SUCH ACTIVITIES. DCM ASKED IF ANY ASSURANCE COULD BE PROVIDED FOR VORSTER THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE THE CASE, IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE HIS RELEASE OF ALL PRISONERS. OBASANJO SAID HE WAS JUST GOING TO SUGGEST THE SAME THING; HE SAW THE CREATION OF NORMAL CONDITIONS IN NAMIBIA A TWO-WAY STREET-- IF PRISONERS WERE TO BE RELEASED IT SHOULD BE  
SECRET

PAGE 04     STATE 290675

POSSIBLE TO GIVE ASSURANCE THAT THEY WOULD NOT ENGAGE IN VIOLENCE. OBASANJO SAID HE WOULD PUT THIS TO NUJOMA BUT WOULD NOT EMBARRASS HIM BY ASKING HIM TO REPLY AT THE MOMENT.

6. OBASANJO WENT ON TO COMMENT THAT ALL ELEMENTS OF NAMIBIAN POLITICAL SPECTRUM WOULD BE EMBRACED WITHIN NUJOMA'S DELEGATION. DCM QUESTIONED WHETHER THIS WOULD INCLUDE PRESENT LEADERSHIP IN NAMIBIA, AND NUJOMA CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE KAPUWO AND CO. IN HIS DELEGATION. THEY COULD SIT AS PART OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION BUT HE WOULD NEGOTIATE ONLY WITH SOUTH AFRICA; THERE WOULD BE NOTHING TO NEGOTIATE WITH KAPUWO ABOUT. NUJOMA OBSERVED THAT SOME NAMIBIAN LEADERS FORMERLY COOPERATING WITH SOUTH AFRICA HAD COME OVER TO HIS SIDE, AND THESE HE WOULD GLADLY INCLUDE IN HIS DELEGATION. OBASANJO ASKED IF HE WOULD ALSO RECEIVE KAPUWO, ET AL., IF THEY TOO WERE TO COME OVER TO NUJOMA'S SIDE. NUJOMA SAID HE WOULD (BUT HE DID NOT SOUND VERY CONVINCING ABOUT IT).

7. OBASANJO THEN PRESENTED FMG VIEW THAT CONDITIONS IN ZIMBABWE, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA ARE INTOLERABLE AND TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. SITUATION IS DIFFERENT IN EACH, AND SOLUTIONS SOUGHT MUST DIFFER ONE FROM THE OTHER, BUT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO FIND ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS

IN ALL THREE. HE SAID HE REALIZED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER, HAVING GOT VORSTER'S COOPERATION "AS AN ALLY" IN A JOINT APPROACH ON ZIMBABWE, TO PUT PRESSURE ON VORSTER WITH RESPECT TO NAMIBIA, BUT THIS MUST BE DONE. HE SAID HE APPRECIATED U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS INVOLVED, BUT HE BELIEVED U.S. COULD EXERT PRESSURE ON VORSTER FOR CHANGE AND STILL PROTECT ITS INTERESTS. HE CONCLUDED THAT NAMIBIAN SITUATION IS MOVING TOWARD MILITARY ACTION, AS IT HAS IN ZIMBABWE, AND THE FURTHER DOWN THAT ROAD ONE GOES THE MORE SLIPPERY AND UNCERTAIN CONTROL BECOMES. FMG WANTS TO STOP THIS DIRECTION OF MOVEMENT WHILE STILL POSSIBLE; "SAM IS BECOMING INATTENTIVE TO NIGERIA", AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT. OBASANJO FEARED VORSTER WAS WATCHING THE GENEVA ZIMBABWE CONFERENCE AND WOULD BACK OUT OF ALL CONCESSIONS HE HAD MADE. DCM WENT BACK TO OBASANJO'S COMMENT THAT THE SECRETARY HAD APPROACHED SOUTH AFRICA ON ZIMBABWE "AS AN ALLY," AND SAID FLATLY THIS WAS NOT THE CASE; HE HAD PRESENTED THE OBJECTIVE FACTS OF THE SITUATION AND RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION WHICH WERE IN SOUTH AFRICA'S BASIS LONG-RANGE INTERESTS. DCM THEREFORE HOPED PROGRESS WOULD CONTINUE, AS IT WAS INDEED IN INTERESTS

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 290675

OF ALL CONCERNED.

8. OBASANJO THEN STRAYED OFF ON RATHER LENGTHY TANGENT ABOUT ANGOLA, POOH-POOHING COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN AFRICA ("DO I LOOK LIKE A COMMUNIST?"), AND SAYING AFRICANS AND SPECIFICALLY HE HIMSELF TOOK NO PRIDE IN CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA, BUT THAT PRESENCE IS THE FAULT OF THE U.S. DCM SAID U.S. CONCERN IS NOT SO MUCH WITH NETO AS WITH UNCERTAIN EXTENT OF HIS AUTHORITY IN ANGOLA IF HE MUST RELY ON LARGE NUMBERS OF CUBAN TROOPS TO MAINTAIN CONTROL; VERY FACT OF HEAVY TROOP PRESENCE CARRIES IMPLICATION OF UNACCEPTABLE FOREIGN (COMMUNIST) INFLUENCE OVER ANGOLAN AFFAIRS. OBASANJO REITERATED IT WAS THE FAULT OF THE U.S., WHICH SHOULD CEASE ITS SUPPORT OF UNITA/FNLA; IT WAS THIS EXTERNAL THREAT THAT MADE THE CUBAN TROOPS NECESSARY. IF U.S. WITHDRAWS SUPPORT, NIGERIA AND OTHERS CAN THEN PRESS NETO TO SEND THE CUBANS PACKING. DCM DENIED ANY CURRENT U.S.G. SUPPORT OF UNITA/FNLA BUT OBASANJO WAS HEAVILY SKEPTICAL. NUJOMA CITED CURRENT VIOLENCE IN ANGOLA ATTRIBUTED TO MPLA/SWAPO BUT ASSERTED SOUTH AFRICANS WERE ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE AND WERE USING FRENCH HELICOPTERS TO SEIZE ANGOLAN VILLAGES, KILL LEADERS AND TAKE VILLAGERS TO NAMIBIA "FOR THEIR SAFETY."

DCM DID NOT PROFESS TO KNOW DETAILS OF THE SITUATION BUT POINTED OUT THAT IN ANY EVENT U.S.G. WAS NOT INVOLVED. OBASANJO CONCLUDED HE COULD NOT BELIEVE U.S. WAS UNABLE TO EXERT INFLUENCE IN THIS SITUATION AND ON ZAIRE IN CONNECTION WITH SUPPORT TO UNITA AND FNLA.

9. HOUR-AND-A-HALF MEETING WITH OBASANJO ENDED WITH NUJOMA'S REITERATING THAT HE WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION OF PROGRESS SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD ACHIEVED SINCE THEIR SEPTEMBER 29TH MEETING AND ALSO WOULD LIKE A RESPONSE REGARDING "SWAPO'S

CONDITIONS FOR TALKS." OBASANJO EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER FRANKNESS AND DIRECTNESS OF EXCHANGE IN WHICH "WE HAVE COVERED A LOT OF TERRITORY." DCM WELCOMED OPPORTUNITY TO CLEAR UP APPARENT CONFUSION AND HOPED WAY COULD BE OPENED FOR EARLY PROGRESS TO A NAMIBIAN CONFERENCE. OBASANJO SAID HE WOULD KNOW WHERE TO REACH NUJUMA WHEN AN ANSWER IS FORTHCOMING ON THE LATTER'S QUESTIONS.

10. COMMENT: THE ABOVE EXCHANGE, PARTICULARLY ON NAMIBIA, WAS TOUGH BUT CONSTRUCTIVE IN TONE. ONE POINT DCM INTENTIONALLY SIDE-STEPPED WAS THAT OF U.N. ROLE ON GENEVA NAMIBIAN CONFERENCE.

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 290675

NUJOMA EMPHASIZED IT MUST BE UNDER "U.N. AUSPICES", SPOKE OF U.N. SYG OR OTHER OFFICIAL CHAIRING, AND "SWAPO'S CONDITIONS" CALLED FOR U.N. COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA TO HAVE AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. DCM SIMPLY STATED THAT SAG HAD AGREED CONFERENCE COULD BE HELD UNDER "AEGIS" OF U.N.

11. NUJOMA'S INSISTENCE ON SAG RELEASE OF ALL SWAPO PRISONERS BEFORE JOINING IN NEGOTIATIONS APPEARED TO BE THE CRUCIAL STICKING POINT. WHILE WE DO NOT KNOW HIS REACTION TO OUR SUGGESTION REGARDING GUARANTEE OF NON-PARTICIPATION IN VIOLENCE BY PRISONERS IF RELEASED, DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE UTILITY OF EXPLORING THIS APPROACH IN NEXT COMMUNICATION WITH NUJOMA. HE IS CLEARLY WAITING FOR USG REPLY ON "SWAPO'S CONDITIONS FOR TALKS" AND UP-DATE ON PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN TALKS WITH SAG SINCE SEPTEMBER 29. EASUM UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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